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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 000621

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NSC FOR DAN FISK  
STATE FOR A/S SHANNON  
DEFENSE FOR DASD PARDO MAURER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/16/2016

TAGS: [AR](#) [MARR](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: INVITING ARGENTINA TO THE MIAMI PSI MEETING

REF: A. STATE 41775

[1](#)B. 04 BUENOS AIRES 3155  
[1](#)C. 04 BUENOS AIRES 3222  
[1](#)D. 05 BUENOS AIRES 319  
[1](#)E. 05 BUENOS AIRES 497  
[1](#)F. 05 STATE 63913  
[1](#)G. 05 BUENOS AIRES 997  
[1](#)H. 05 BUENOS AIRES 924  
[1](#)I. 05 BUENOS AIRES 1159  
[1](#)J. 05 BUENOS AIRES 1904  
[1](#)K. 05 BUENOS AIRES 2093  
[1](#)L. 05 BUENOS AIRES 2527  
[1](#)M. 05 BUENOS AIRES 3145  
[1](#)N. BUENOS AIRES 382

Classified By: DCM Hugo Llorens, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: Argentina has been a strong supporter of PSI since its inception. It remains the only country in South America to have formally endorsed PSI. Argentine officials have been willing to make this commitment operational. Post recommends against delivering the instructions set forth in ref. A. Post believes that if we insist on the participation requirements as a precondition for receiving an invitation to the April 11-12 Miami Operational Experts Group (OEG) meeting, the Argentines - despite their demonstrated enthusiasm for the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and stated desire to participate at the operational level - will be forced to decline. Post believes this would spell the end of PSI for Argentina. Post recommends postponing a decision on Argentina's long-term participation in the OEG process until after the Miami meeting.

A History of Support for PSI  
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[1](#)2. (C) A strong supporter of WMD nonproliferation, Argentina has been interested in the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) since attending the May 2004 one-year anniversary meeting in Krakow. In November 2004 Argentina sent observers to the Chokepoint Exercise in Key West and GOA officials began expressing interest in signing the PSI Statement of Interdiction Principles, as well as offering to host a PSI exercise in the South Atlantic (ref. B). Post recommended exploring the GOA offer to host such an exercise. (ref. C).

[1](#)3. (C) After follow-up requests by the Ambassador and DCM in January 2005 (ref D and E), Argentina became the first (and so far only) South American country to endorse the PSI Statement of Interdiction Principles on March 30, 2005 (ref

F). Since then, post has sought ways to make Argentina's political commitment to PSI operational. A mid-sized country, Argentina nevertheless has a very professional military capable of maritime interdiction, along with an impressive Border Police and Coast Guard. Relations between the Argentine and U.S. militaries are excellent.

¶4. (C) Following the GOA's March 2005 formal endorsement of PSI, A/S Rademaker asked GOA officials to consider participating in PSI exercises (ref. G). Post also began a public diplomacy campaign to raise awareness of PSI. It hosted a video conference in May 2005 for leading defense and security experts in Argentina with A/S Rademaker in Washington (ref. H and I).

¶5. (C) In August 2005, GOA officials began requesting that Argentina be invited to PSI exercises and meetings. Post proposed to Washington a three-pronged strategy (ref. J) to deepen Argentina's involvement in PSI: a) inviting GOA officials to participate in the Operational Experts Group (OEG) meetings; b) facilitating invitations from PSI nations that host exercises; and c) helping Argentina host a PSI exercise in 2006. (Argentina eventually was invited to a UK-hosted exercise in November 2005 and received invitations to the Australia and Turkey-led exercises in 2006.)

¶6. (C) Also in August 2005, A/S DeSutter encouraged GOA officials to deepen their involvement in PSI as a way of supporting UNSCR 1540 (ref. K). The leading Argentine proponent of PSI, Ambassador Sersale, agreed on the need to get more involved in PSI, and repeated the GOA's offer to host a PSI exercise. Post recommended following up this offer before Sersale departed for a new post in December 2005 (ref. L). The Ambassador briefed incoming MOD Garre on PSI later that month (ref. M) and she was receptive to the idea of broadening involvement.

¶7. (C) At a February 15 lunch hosted by the Ambassador, the new MFA's new Director of International Security, Elsa Kelly asked the Ambassador if Argentina could be included in the April 11-12 OEG meeting (ref. N). In post's view, the Miami meeting is a necessary first step to making Argentina's commitment to PSI operational. Post recognizes that OEG meetings represent a serious, long-term, expert-level commitment to PSI and has impressed this fact several times on GOA officials. The GOA has proposed a serious delegation for the Miami meeting consisting of five experts from the Ministry of Defense, the Coast Guard, the Border Police, and Customs.

#### No Invitation May Result in End of PSI in Argentina

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¶8. (C) Post recommends against delivering the instructions set forth in ref. A. Post believes that if we insist on the participation requirements as a precondition for receiving an invitation to the April 11-12 Miami OEG meeting, the Argentines - despite their demonstrated enthusiasm for the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and stated desire to participate at the operational level - will be forced to decline. The Argentines have the financial and technical resources to play a serious and constructive role in PSI. Nevertheless, the conditions outlined in ref. A are likely to be rejected given that the Argentines have not been invited to any previous OEG meetings and do not yet have a large cadre of PSI experts. Post believes that de facto blocking of GOA participation in Miami would spell the end of PSI for Argentina. This would be a loss, given Argentina's geographical location and its excellent track record on nonproliferation issues.

¶9. (C) Post recommends that a reasonable alternative would be to encourage the GOA to develop a relatively small core of PSI experts in key Argentine agencies - such as the ones listed above - that would be better able to participate in as many OEG meetings and other PSI activities as possible. Post further recommends that a decision on whether to include Argentina in future OEG meetings be based on the quality of

their participation of the Miami meeting.

¶10. (U) Reftels available at  
[< /a>](http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/wha/buenosaires)

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